

ON SOME MYTHICAL WORDS IN A 19th CENTURY UYGHUR DICTIONARY*

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ABSTRACT: Robert Barkley Shaw's Uyghur-English dictionary called *A Sketch of the Turki Language as Spoken in Eastern Turkistan (Kāshghar and Yarkand)* is an important source for the researchers studying on Modern Uyghur and Uyghur culture. In his dictionary, Shaw not only gives simply English definitions of the Uyghur words but he also sometimes gives detailed information about Uyghurs' and other Turkic peoples' cultural features. Also, this dictionary includes some entries about mythical beliefs, magical activities, and superstitions of Uyghurs. Especially, in this article, we focused on the general names of soothsayers, magicians or shamans that took roles among Uyghurs. Belonging to this sphere we gave the brief etymological and cultural background of six words (*rambal* [رمبال rambal], *kuşnaç* [قوشناچ qushnâch], *yağrünüçi* [ياغرونچي yaghrün-chi], *sinçi* [سينچي sin-chi], *arbaqçi* [ارباچي arbâq-chi], and *közlük* [كوزلوك köz-luk]) that we collected from Shaw's dictionary. Also, concerning to the mourning tradition of Uyghurs we laid stress on the word *karalıq* [قاراليق qara-liq]. Through this word, we tried to show how the religions and the cultures integrate into each other.

Keywords: Uyghurs, Modern Uyghur, Mythical Beliefs, Soothsayer, Magician, Robert Barkley Shaw, Etymology.

19. YÜZYIL UYGUR SÖZLÜĞÜNDE GEÇEN BAZI MİTSEL SÖZCÜKLER ÜZERİNE

ÖZ: Robert Barkley Shaw'ın *A Sketch of the Turki Language as Spoken in Eastern Turkistan (Kāshghar and Yarkand)* adlı Uygurca-İngilizce sözlüğü Yeni Uygurca ve Uygur kültürü üzerine çalışan araştırmacılar için önemli bir kaynaktır. Shaw, sözlüğünde basit düzeyde Yeni Uygurca sözcüklerin İngilizce karşılıklarını vermekle yetinmemiş kimi zaman Uygurlar ve diğer Türk topluluklarının kültürel özellikleri hakkında da ayrıntılı bilgiler vermiştir. Sözlükte, Uygurların mitsel inançları, büyü ile ilgili aktiviteleri ve batıl inançları ile ilgili madde başı sözcüklere de yer verilmiştir. Makalemizde ise özellikle Uygurlar arasında kâhinlere, büyücülere ya da

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şamanlara verilen adlar üzerinde durduk. Shaw'ın sözlüğünde tespit ettiğimiz bu alana ait altı sözcüğün (*rambal* [رمبال rambal], *kuşnaç* [قوشناچ qushnâch], *yağrünçi* [ياغرونچي yaghrün-chi], *sinçi* [سينچي sin-chi], *arbaqçi* [ارباقي arbâq-chi] ve *közlük* [كوزلوك köz-luk]) kökenleri ve kültürel arka planları hakkında kısaca bilgi verdik. Ayrıca Uygurlarda yas geleneği ile ilgili olarak *karalîk* [قاراليق qara-liq] sözcüğü üzerinde durduk. Bu sözcük üzerinden dinlerin ve kültürlerin birbirleri ile nasıl içi içe geçtiklerini göstermeye çalıştık.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Uygurlar, Yeni Uygurca, Mitsel İnançlar, Kâhin, Büyücü, Robert Barkley Shaw, Etimoloji.

Introduction

In the Uyghur-English dictionary, *A Sketch of the Turki Language as Spoken in Eastern Turkistan (Kâshghar and Yarkand)*, besides Uyghurs, Shaw sometimes gives detailed information about other Xingjian dwellers' or nomads' traditions and shows their beliefs about the world. In this dictionary, we can see which mythical methods Uyghurs used while they were curing a patient or which events Kazaks thought as evil.

From Shaw's dictionary, I collected 17 words related to the myths, superstitions and magic. These words are as below:

1. *albasti* [البستي albasti]¹ “a night-mare, an incubus”

2. *arbaqçi* [ارباقي arbâq-chi]² “one who uses such charms³”

→ Its cognates: *arbamaq* [ارباماق arba-mâq]⁴, *arbatmaq* [اربات{م}اق arba'-t-mâq]⁵, *arbaşmaq* [ارباشماق arba'-sh-mâq]⁶, *arbaq* [ارباق arbâ'q]⁷

3. *azğun* [ازغون az-ghun]⁸ “some influence which causes men to lose their way (a local superstition in the Takla-makán desert)”

¹ Robert Barkley Shaw, *A Sketch of the Turki Language as Spoken in Eastern Turkistan (Kâshghar and Yarkand), With lists of names of birds and plants by J. Scully, Part II. Vocabulary, Turki-English*, Baptist Mission Press, Calcutta, 1880, p. 12; R. B. Shaw, *Kâşgar ve Yarkend Ağzı Sözlüğü*, Prepared by Fikret Yıldırım (with Turkish translation and supplements), Türk Dil Kurumu, Ankara, 2014, p. 34a.

² R. B. Shaw, (1880), *ibid.*, p. 5; R. B. Shaw, (2014), *ibid.*, p. 38b.

³ Referring to the word *arbaq* “a spoken charm for curing snake bites, or procuring fine weather”.

⁴ R. B. Shaw, (1880), *ibid.*, p. 5; R. B. Shaw, (2014), *ibid.*, p. 38b.

⁵ R. B. Shaw, (1880), *ibid.*, p. 5; R. B. Shaw, (2014), *ibid.*, p. 38b.

⁶ R. B. Shaw, (1880), *ibid.*, p. 5; R. B. Shaw, (2014), *ibid.*, p. 38b.

⁷ R. B. Shaw, (1880), *ibid.*, p. 5; R. B. Shaw, (2014), *ibid.*, p. 38b.

⁸ R. B. Shaw, (1880), *ibid.*, p. 8; R. B. Shaw, (2014), *ibid.*, p. 48b.

4. *karalîk* [قاراليق qara-liq]⁹ “in mourning (which in Yarkand consists in not shaving, putting on white and not-coloured clothes, &c.)”

5. *közlük* [كوزلوك köz-luk]¹⁰ “far-sighted, long-sighted; also, gifted with the evil eye [supposed to be a great advantage as the possessor can compel the sale to him of any horse, &c., that he takes a fancy to, under penalty of causing it to die if it be refused to him]”

→ Its cognates: *köz* [كوز köz]¹¹, *közçi* [كوزچي köz-chi]¹², (as an adjective) *közlük* [كوزلوك köz-luk]¹³, *közükmaq* [كوزوكماك köz-ük-mak]¹⁴

6. *kuşnaç* [قوشناچ qushnâch]¹⁵ “a soothsayer, or foreteller of future events”

→ Its cognate (?): *kuşnanci* [قوشنانجي qushnanji]¹⁶

7. *kuzğun* [قوزغون quzghun]¹⁷ “a raven (supposed by the Turkis to live a thousand years)”

8. *mazar* [مازار mâzâr]¹⁸ “a tomb of a holy man (which is revered as a shrine and ornamented with flags and yak-tails fastened to long poles, also often with horns of wild animals). The cairns, which one meets with throughout the mountains separating India from Turkistân, on all noticeable spots such as Passes, &c. are, in the parts of these mountains inhabited by the Musalmans, honoured with the title of “Mâzâr” and considered to be the tombs of ancient worthies, Arabic”

9. *öpka kaçmaq* [اوپكا قاقماق öpka-qâqmâq]¹⁹ “to beat one’s shoulders and back with the fresh lungs of an animal. A Turki custom supposed to be a remedy in illness”

10. *puhraşmaq* [پوخراشماق pukhra-’sh-mâq]²⁰ “to sneeze together, [when the horses of a Kazzak expedition do this it is considered a bad omen]”

⁹ R. B. Shaw, (1880), *ibid.*, p. 141; R. B. Shaw, (2014), *ibid.*, p. 142b.

¹⁰ R. B. Shaw, (1880), *ibid.*, p. 171; R. B. Shaw, (2014), *ibid.*, p. 167b.-168a.

¹¹ R. B. Shaw, (1880), *ibid.*, p. 170; R. B. Shaw, (2014), *ibid.*, p. 167b.

¹² R. B. Shaw, (1880), *ibid.*, p. 171; R. B. Shaw, (2014), *ibid.*, p. 167b.

¹³ R. B. Shaw, (1880), *ibid.*, p. 171; R. B. Shaw, (2014), *ibid.*, p. 167b.

¹⁴ R. B. Shaw, (1880), *ibid.*, p. 171; R. B. Shaw, (2014), *ibid.*, p. 168a.

¹⁵ R. B. Shaw, (1880), *ibid.*, p. 156; R. B. Shaw, (2014), *ibid.*, p. 176a.

¹⁶ R. B. Shaw, (1880), *ibid.*, p. 156; R. B. Shaw, (2014), *ibid.*, p. 176a.

¹⁷ R. B. Shaw, (1880), *ibid.*, p. 156; R. B. Shaw, (2014), *ibid.*, p. 177b.

¹⁸ R. B. Shaw, (1880), *ibid.*, p. 180-181; R. B. Shaw, (2014), *ibid.*, p. 188a.

¹⁹ R. B. Shaw, (1880), *ibid.*, p. 16; R. B. Shaw, (2014), *ibid.*, p. 200a.

²⁰ R. B. Shaw, (1880), *ibid.*, p. 58; R. B. Shaw, (2014), *ibid.*, p. 207a.

→ Its cognates: *puhratmaq* [پوخراتماق pukhra-t-máq]²¹, *puhramak* [پوخراماق pukhra-máq]²²

11. *rambal* [رمبال rambal]²³ “a soothsayer, Persian”

12. *rudapay* [روده پاي rudah-pai]²⁴ “a persistent, or, importunate person; an incubus, an old man of the sea, Persian”

13. *sinçi* [سينچي sin-chi]²⁵ “a trier, an assayer, an experimenter; specially, a judge of horse-flesh”

→ Its cognate: *sin* [سين sin]²⁶

14. *tug* [توغ tugh]²⁷ “a yak’s tail fastened at the top of a long stick and used as the standard of a military officer of rank (not below that of Pansad or chief of five hundred); also to mark the graves of saintly personages”

15. *tumar* [تومار tumâr]²⁸ “a written charm, Kàzzàk”

16. *yağrünçi* [ياغرونچي yaghrün-chi]²⁹ “one who divines by means of the shoulder-blades of sheep, Kàzzàk, Kirghiz”

→ Its cognate: *yağrün* [ياغرون yaghrün]³⁰

17. *yetti* [يети yetti]³¹ “seven [*yetti-yulduz* or *yetti ughri* (‘the seven stars’ or ‘the seven thieves’), the name of the Great Bear among the Kazzaks, who say that this constellation is a gang of robbers ever circling round to watch their opportunity of carrying off the two horses (two bright stars of Ursa Minor) called *Aqbôz ât* and *Kök-bôz ât* (‘white-grey horse’ and ‘blue grey horse’) which are picketed to a peg (the Pole-Star) round which they graze]”

Here, I will focus on the words as general names of soothsayers or magicians and a word, *qaralîk* related to the mourning tradition.

²¹ R. B. Shaw, (1880), *ibid.*, p. 58; R. B. Shaw, (2014), *ibid.*, p. 207a.

²² R. B. Shaw, (1880), *ibid.*, p. 58; R. B. Shaw, (2014), *ibid.*, p. 207a.

²³ R. B. Shaw, (1880), *ibid.*, p. 114; R. B. Shaw, (2014), *ibid.*, p. 211a.

²⁴ R. B. Shaw, (1880), *ibid.*, p. 114; R. B. Shaw, (2014), *ibid.*, p. 211b.

²⁵ R. B. Shaw, (1880), *ibid.*, p. 131; R. B. Shaw, (2014), *ibid.*, p. 223a.-b.

²⁶ R. B. Shaw, (1880), *ibid.*, p. 130; R. B. Shaw, (2014), *ibid.*, p. 223a.

²⁷ R. B. Shaw, (1880), *ibid.*, p. 76-77; R. B. Shaw, (2014), *ibid.*, p. 269b.

²⁸ R. B. Shaw, (1880), *ibid.*, p. 80; R. B. Shaw, (2014), *ibid.*, p. 271a.

²⁹ R. B. Shaw, (1880), *ibid.*, p. 194; R. B. Shaw, (2014), *ibid.*, p. 298a.

³⁰ R. B. Shaw, (1880), *ibid.*, p. 194; R. B. Shaw, (2014), *ibid.*, p. 298a.

³¹ R. B. Shaw, (1880), *ibid.*, p. 198-199; R. B. Shaw, (2014), *ibid.*, p. 310b.

Shaw compiles this dictionary in the second half of the 19th century. We know that during the 10th-11th centuries, Islam had extended its influence into the western region of the Tarim basin, especially the Kashgar area. This new religion gradually spread among Uyghurs. All of them were converted by the 16th century.³² Although Islam does not permit magic, we can see some old traditions or traces of old religions related to magic and superstitions among Uyghurs in the time when Shaw wrote his Uyghur-English dictionary and today.

Most of these magical activities resulted from the weakness of people against the nature or illnesses. However, making a magic is not a job of common people. It was supposed that there were special people who had extraordinary hidden powers.

We see these special people's, namely, soothsayers' or magicians' general names or professional names in our word group which consists of six words. These are *rambal* [رمبال rambal], *kušnaç* [قوشناچ qushnâch], *yağrünçi* [ياغرونچي yaghrün-chi], *sinçi* [سينچي sin-chi], *arbaqçi* [ارباقچي arbâq-chi], and *közluk* [كوزلوك köz-luk].

Firstly, *rambal*, *kušnaç*, and *yağrünçi* directly bear the meaning "soothsayer". Shaw gives the origin of *rambal* "a soothsayer" as Persian. Actually, this word is a corrupted form of the Arabic word *rammâl*.³³ And, Uyghurs got this word via Persian.

Today, in an Uyghur dictionary called *Uyğur Tiliniñ İzahlıq Luğiti*, we find this word as *remmal*³⁴ which is a closer form of the original Arabic word than obsolete Uyghur form *rambal*. But *remmal* does not have common usage among Uyghurs, instead of it, *remçi*³⁵ is commonly used.

The second word, *kušnaç* means "a soothsayer or foreteller of future events". In Shaw's dictionary there is also a word, *kušnanci* [قوشنانچي qushnanji] which is probably etymologically related to this word. In Shaw's dictionary *kušnanci* means "an educated woman; also a female teacher".

³² Konuralp Ercilasun, *Tarihin Derinliklerinden 19. Yüzyıla Kâşgar*, Türk Tarih Kurumu, Ankara, 2013, p. 37; Linda Benson - Ingvar Svanberg, *The Kazaks of China, Essays on an Ethnic Minority*, Studia Multiethnica Upsaliensia, No. 5, Almqvist & Wiksell International, Uppsala, 1988, p. 19.

³³ See Francis Joseph Steingass, *A Comprehensive Persian-English Dictionary, Including the Arabic Words and Phrases to be met with in Persian literature*, Crosby Lockwood and Son, Printed by W. H. Allen and Co., LTD., London, [1892], p. 586a., under the entry *rimâl*.

³⁴ *Uyğur Tiliniñ İzahlıq Luğiti*, III, Milletler Neşriyatı, 1992, p. 239b.

³⁵ *ibid.*, III, 1992, p. 239b.

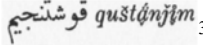
Today, in Uyghur just the word *kušnaç* lives, interestingly, with the similar meaning of *kušnanci*:

*kušnaç*³⁶ “it is used respectfully to name the wives of imam-muezzin, reverend, mullah, and like that religious men who are elder”

*kušnaç*³⁷ “female teacher (female religious teacher)”

In Whitaker’s work, *Eastern Turki (as spoken in Turkistan)* we also find the word *kušnaç*³⁸. Like Shaw, Whitaker gives *kušnaç*’s meaning as “a soothsayer”.

In Raquette’s *English-Turki Dictionary* there is a word *kuštencim* which seems to be a variation of the word *kušnanci*.

 *kuštencim*³⁹ “a title of honor given to a leading woman”. It is clear that the word has the 1st person singular possessive suffix like the Uyghur word *begim*⁴⁰ “the wife of a Beg [also *beg-im* “my Beg”]”.

In the Turfan dialect of Uyghur we see the word *kušunçum*⁴¹ “the wife of one’s teacher or master”.

Uyghur *kušnaç* is also seen in Uzbek language as *kušnoç*. One of the meanings of *kušnoç*⁴² is “a miracle worker and fortune-teller”. In the Basilov’s article, “The ‘Shamanic Disease’ in Uzbek Folk Beliefs”, we see *kušnaç* as a shamaness. To Basilov “like many other peoples who preserved shamanism in their cultures, the Uzbeks believed that the beginning of shamanic activity was related to a special disease caused by the spirits”.⁴³ In his article, we find some information how an Uzbek woman, Oçil, becomes *kušnaç*. Oçil is haunted by spirits, goes mad and, finally, on the advice of

³⁶ *ibid.*, IV, 1994, p. 339a.

³⁷ E. N. Necip, *Yeni Uygur Türkçesi Sözlüğü*, Translated by İklil Kurban, Türk Dil Kurumu, Ankara, 1995, p. 250.

³⁸ H. Whitaker, *Eastern Turki (as spoken in Turkistan)*, Part I, Grammar, Part II, Turki-English Vocabulary, Part III, English-Turki Vocabulary, Regimental Printing Press, 2nd Battalion, Rifle Brigade, Chaubattia, Uttar Pradesh, 1909, (Part II), p. 12.

³⁹ Gustav Raquette, *English-Turki Dictionary, Based on the Dialects of Kashgar and Yarkand*, CWK Gleerup, Lund and Otto Harrassowitz, Leipzig, 1927, p. 136b.

⁴⁰ R. B. Shaw, (1880), *op. cit.*, p. 55; R. B. Shaw, (2014), *op. cit.*, p. 58a.

⁴¹ Abdurishid Yakup, *The Turfan Dialect of Uyghur*, Harrassowitz Verlag, Wiesbaden, 2005, p. 465a.

⁴² Z. M. Ma’rufov, *Uzbek Tiliniñ İzohli Luğati*, II, Moskva, 1981, p. 629a.

⁴³ Viladimir N. Basilov, “The ‘Shamanic Disease’ in Uzbek Folk Beliefs”, *Shaman*, Volume 3, Numbers 1 & 2, Spring/Autumn 1995, Second Edition, Revised and Expanded, 2009, p. 5.

Gadoy-Selkin-bowa, a Muslim holy person (*işan*), she becomes a shamaness (*kuşnaç*).

In this case, it is clearly seen that becoming a shamaness (*kuşnaç*) is provided through a religious figure. Namely, a shamanic activity is legalized via a religion, Islam.

The etymology of the words *kuşnaç* and *kuşnanci* is obscure for us so we offered more than one analysis.

For *kuşnaç* we have two proposals:

1) There is a word *koş*⁴⁴ “planetary conjunction⁴⁵; omen, fortune” in Kipchak Turkic. *kuşnaç* might be formed with the agentive suffix *+naç*⁴⁶ which is an unfamiliar suffix to the Turkic word formation.

kuşnaç < *kuş* (*koş*?) + *naç*

2) The Mongolian *koşuŋ* (*h-*)⁴⁷ “mockery, jesting, foolery, joke; satire, humor; satirical, humorous” may be the base for *kuşnaç* with the Turkic diminutive suffix *+aç*.⁴⁸

kuşnaç < *koşuŋ* + *aç*

For the etymology of *kuşnanci* our proposals are as below:

⁴⁴ Recep Toparlı - Hanifi Vural - Recep Karaatlı, *Kıpçak Türkçesi Sözlüğü*, Türk Dil Kurumu, Ankara, 2003, p. 154b., entry *koş* (I).

⁴⁵ For the explanation of Arabic astronomical term *kırân* القرآن and its plural form *kırânât* القرائات see Yavuz Unat, “Kırânât”, *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslâm Ansiklopedisi*, vol. 25, (Kastilya-Kile), Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı, Ankara, 2002, p. 437.

⁴⁶ Compare this suffix with the denominal suffix *+maç* which is seen in *sığırmaç* (see *Türkçe Sözlük*, Prepared by Şükrü Hâluk Akalın et al., 11th ed., Türk Dil Kurumu, Ankara, 2011, p. 2090b.), and not clearly in *ılmaç* (for detailed discussion about the etymology of *ılmaç* see Gerard Clauson, *An Etymological Dictionary of Pre-Thirteenth Century Turkish*, Oxford University Press, London, 1972, p. 500a.; Gerhard Doerfer, *Türkische und mongolische Elemente im Neupersischen, unter besonderer Berücksichtigung älterer neupersischer Geschichtsquellen, vor allem der Mongolen- und Timuridenzeit*, II, Steiner, Wiesbaden, 1965, p. 662-665, entry 1010; Hasan Eren, *Türk Dilinin Etimolojik Sözlüğü*, Bizim Büro Basımevi, Ankara, 1999, p. 113-114.

⁴⁷ For the word *koşuŋ* see Ferdinand D. Lessing, *Mongolian-English Dictionary*, University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1960, p. 972a. Räsänen gives Altay *kojon*, Tuvan *ko⁴jun*, and Yakut *hosōn* related to the Turkic word *koşug* (< *koş* - *uğ*) “poem, song”. For details see Martti Räsänen, *Versuch eines etymologischen Wörterbuchs der Türksprachen*, Helsinki, 1969, p. 284a. However, as Levitskaya et al. showed that these words are borrowings from Mongolian. For details see L. S. Levitskaya - A. V. Dibo - V. I. Rassadin, *Etimologičeskij slovar' tyurkskih yazıkov, Obşçetyurkskiye i mejtyurkskiye leksičeskiye osnovi na bukvu 'K'*, Rossiyskaya Akademiya Nauk, Institut Yazıkoznaniya, Izdatel'stvo Indrik, Moskva, 2000, p. 94.

⁴⁸ The same suffix is seen in the Old Turkic word *anaç*. See G. Clauson, *op. cit.*, p. 172a.

1) Related to the above first explanation for *kušnaç*, the word *kušnanci*'s structure can be explained with 'pleonasm'. Double agentive suffixes, *+naç* and *+çi* come to the root *kuš*. The last sound /ç/ in the suffix *+naç* assimilates to /n/.

kušnanci < *kuš* (*koş?*) + *naç* + *çi*

2) Above, we showed the word *kuştencim* in Raquette's *English-Turki Dictionary*. In his etymological dictionary Räsänen gives a word *kuştan* ~ *koştan* in Kazan Tatar, Mishar Tatar, and Chuvash with the meaning "leader".⁴⁹ Although we again see *koş* (*kuş?*) in the word *koştan*, it is hard to suggest an exact proposal about the root of this word. Therefore, we are contented with these word analyses:

kuştencim < *kuştan* (*koştan?*) + *çi* + *m*

kušnanci < *kuştan* (*koştan?*) + *çi*. The /t/ sound in the beginning of the second syllable of *kuştan* assimilates to /n/.

3) The word *kuşunçum*'s etymology was offered by Yakup as below⁵⁰:

kuşunçum < *kušnaç* + 1sg Poss. *-um*

Actually, without possessive suffix Uyghur word *kuşunçu* seems to be a loanword from Mongolian *koşuñçi* (*h-*)⁵¹ "mockler, joker".

kušnanci may be directly a loanword from Mongolian like *kuşunçum*. The Mongolian word *koşuñagçi* (*h-*)⁵² "satirist, joker, clown; humorist" provides us with below analysis:

kušnanci < *kuš* + *na* - *nci* < *kuşn* + *na* - *nci* < *koşuñ* + *na* - *nci* < *koşuñ* + *la* - *nci* < *koşuñ* + *la* - *gçi*

Actually, this data shows that it is not easy to say whether *kušnanci* derives from *kušnaç* or it is a corrupted version of *kuştenci* (namely, *kuştanci*). At the beginning of the 20th century the words *kušnanci* and *kuştenci* became obsolete in modern Uyghur language. And, today the word *kušnaç*⁵³ gained new meaning within Islamic religious terminology.

⁴⁹ M. Räsänen, *op. cit.*, p. 284a., entry **koştan*.

⁵⁰ A. Yakup, *op. cit.*, p. 465a.

⁵¹ See F. D. Lessing, *op. cit.*, p. 972a.

⁵² See F. D. Lessing, *ibid.*, p. 972a.

⁵³ According to Esed Sulayman until the incorporation of Xingjian into the People's Republic of China in 1949, most Uyghurs continued to use a traditional form of address consisting of personal name followed by an honorific form. He gives some of these honorific forms and their examples: *bay* "landlord", *bäg* "sir", *añun* (a religious leader), *ğari* (a religious title),

The other word which comes, according to Shaw, from *Kazak* and *Kirghiz* languages is *yağrınçı* “one who divines by means of the shoulder-blades of sheep”. It is clear that in divining using bones of sheep is not arbitrary choice. Sheep had an important place in Old Turkic belief systems. According to Çoruhlu it contains the attributes of heaven. Among Old Turks, sheep were being sacrificed for ancestors’ spirits and in Shamanism to prevent from evil spirits.⁵⁴

In *Divanü Lügati’t-Türk* we see the trace of ‘scapulimancy’ (divination using scapula) in Old Turkic culture. Maḥmūd Kāşğarī gives a proverb that shows the divination by use of the shoulder-blade⁵⁵:

yarın bulğansa el bulğanur “if the shoulder-blade is irregular, the realm is in disorder”.

According to Clauson, *yağrın*⁵⁶ goes to the word *yarın* (1)⁵⁷ “shoulder-blade”. Clauson’s explanation about *yarın* continues: “A synonym word *yağrın* appeared in the medieval period; it can hardly be the original form of *yarın*, a much older word, and may be a mispronunciation due to a supposed etymological connection with *yağır* (*d-*)⁵⁸ [“a saddle-gall”]”.

Räsänen reconstructs the word as **yağ(u)r(-un)* and he gives the Mongolian (*dagari*⁵⁹) and Manchu (*dari-n*) equivalents.⁶⁰ As opposed to

can (a respectful form of address), *törä* “chairman”, *han* “han/king”, *ayim* (a female royal), *büwi* < *bübi* (a female religious leader), *ap’ak* (a member of the royal female staff), *kuşnaç* (a mullah’s wife). Examples: *Qasimbay*, *Osmanbäg*, *Ibrahim Aḥun(d)*, *Yasin Qari*, *Aḥmätcan*, *Älihan Törä*, *Abdukerimhan*, *Nigar Ayim*, *Büwi Patimä*, *Ḥediçe Ap’ak*, *Rabiyä Kuşnaç*. See Ildikó Bellér-Hann - M. Cristina Cesáro - Rachel Harris - Joanne Smith-Finley (eds), *Situating the Uyghurs Between China and Central Asia*, Ashgate Publishing Ltd. Aldershot, 2007, p. 113. For the term *büwi* and about its role similar to *kuşnaç* in Uyghur society see Rachel Harris, “Harmonizing Islam in Xinjiang: Sound and meaning in rural Uyghur religious practice”, *On the Fringes of the Harmonious Society: Tibetans and Uyghurs in Socialist China*, Edited by Trine Brox - Ildikó Bellér-Hann, Nias Press, Copenhagen, 2013, p. 293-317.

⁵⁴ Yaşar Çoruhlu, *Türk Mitolojisinin Anahatları*, Kabcacı, İstanbul, 2006, p. 156.

⁵⁵ Maḥmūd Kāşğarī, *Divanü Lügati’t-Türk*, Translated by Besim Atalay, 5th ed., vol. III, Türk Dil Kurumu, Ankara, 2006, p. 21.

⁵⁶ G. Clauson, *op. cit.*, p. 905b.

⁵⁷ G. Clauson, *ibid.*, p. 970a.

⁵⁸ G. Clauson, *ibid.*, p. 905a.

⁵⁹ According to Clauson, Mongolian *dagari* “abrasion; saddle sore” is a first period loanword from Turkic. See G. Clauson, *ibid.*, p. 905a., entry *yağır* (*d-*). For the word *dagari* see F. D. Lessing, *op. cit.*, 218a. Compare also Mongolian *dalı* (see F. D. Lessing, *ibid.*, p. 226b.) “shoulder blade, scapula; scapula of a sheep used in scapulimancy” and *dalıçı* (see F. D. Lessing, *ibid.*, p. 227a.) “diviner, one who divines by using shoulder blades of a sheep”.

⁶⁰ M. Räsänen, *op. cit.*, p. 178a.-b.

Clauson, Eren thinks the original form of the word as *yağrın* and he analyzes the word as below⁶¹:

*yağrın*⁶² < *yağır* “back, rear, between two shoulder blades” + *(i)n* diminutive suffix

In today’s Uyghur, we do not find the word *yağrınçı* and its cognate *yağrın* “shoulder-blade”. Instead of *yağrın*, Uyghurs, today use the word *tağak*.⁶³

The word *sinçi* means “a trier, an assayer, an experimenter; specially, a judge of horse-flesh”. In this meaning a *sinçi* does not show extraordinary mystic powers to us. However, when we look at this word’s root, we easily infer that *sinçi* is actually a kind of soothsayer.

In Clauson’s etymological dictionary we find the root of *sinçi* as *sin* (1)⁶⁴ “originally ‘the human body’, hence ‘stature, height, external appearance’, and the like. Survives in the latter meanings in north-eastern language group, south-eastern language group, north-central Kirghiz, north-western Karakalpak, Kazan Tatar, Nogay, and in some of them for ‘statue’, especially one on a grave”.⁶⁵ Clauson does not talk about *sinçi* which exists in Mongolian as *sinzi* [*sinci*]⁶⁶ “appearance, shape; mark, symptom”. However, in terms of word definition Uyghur word *sinçi*’s counterpart in Mongolian appears as *sinzici* [*sinciçi*]⁶⁷ → *sinzigeçi* [*sincigeçi*]⁶⁸

⁶¹ H. Eren, *op. cit.*, p. 439b.

⁶² In Turkish dialects the word *yağrın* “back” has 23 variants: *yağarnı, yaan, yaarnı, yağannı, yağarın, yağın, yağınrı, yağır, yağırnı, yağrı, yağrıdal, yağrındalı, yağrını, yangırı, yanır, yanır, yanurlı, yanrı, yargın, yargındalı, yarin, yārni*. See *Türkiye’de Halk Ağzından Derleme Sözlüğü*, v. XI, Türk Dil Kurumu, Ankara, 1979, p. 4117, entry *yağarnı*. The words *yağrıdal, yağrındalı, and yargındalı* are clearly compound words. Interestingly, apart from *yağrı(n)* or *yargın* the words *dal*, and *dalı* in these compounds seem to be the corrupted forms or the variants of the Mongolian word *dalu* “shoulder blade, scapula”.

⁶³ *Uyğur Tiliniñ İzahlıq Luğiti*, II, 1991, p. 58a.

⁶⁴ Clauson gives two different entries for *sin*. The first one was given above. To Clauson, the second *sin* means “tomb”. By the way, Gabain’s suggestion that *sin* “tomb” is a loanword from Chinese *ts’in* “the rear hall in an ancestral temple” was criticized by Clauson. According to Clauson because in Middle Chinese this word had a final *-m*, not *-n*, Gabain’s suggestion is impossible. See G. Clauson, *op. cit.*, p. 832a.-b. For the Chinese word *ts’in* (*ch’in*) see Herbert A. Giles, *A Chinese-English Dictionary*, Second Edition, Revised and Enlarged, Published in Shanghai, China and London, 1912, p. 260, entry 2091. For detailed explanation on the word *sin* “tomb” see H. Eren, *op. cit.*, 368a.-b., entry *sin*.

⁶⁵ G. Clauson, *op. cit.*, p. 832a.

⁶⁶ F. D. Lessing, *op. cit.*, p. 713b.

⁶⁷ F. D. Lessing, *ibid.*, p. 714a.

⁶⁸ F. D. Lessing, *ibid.*, p. 714a.

“fortuneteller; explorer”. Räsänen, in his etymological dictionary, gives the origin of Tuvan *şinçi* “view, appearance; inspect, examine”, and *şinçē-çi* “researcher, explorer” as Mongolian *sinži* “omen, kennzeichen”.⁶⁹

In Kirghiz culture *sinçi* took a special role like *kam* or *başşı*. To Temur, *sinçi* was an expert telling the truth about all beings in the world and he was able to soothsay their future with respect to their present condition.⁷⁰ Temur gives basic tasks of *sinçis* as below⁷¹:

- 1) By looking at male children’s physical features, foretelling their belligerence.
- 2) In war, determining the power of the horses which soldiers ride.
- 3) During a war conjecturing the succeeding attack, and via these conjectures determining the war strategies.

From these explanations it can be said that *sinçi* or *sinçi* originally was a shaman who was the expert of human body in terms of its physical and spiritual sides. Like *kuşnaç* in Uyghur culture, through the spread of Islam and with the end of traditional life, *sinçis* have lost their soothsayer roles among Kirghiz people.⁷²

The other form of *sinçi* in Shaw’s dictionary is *sünçi*⁷³, and today just the word *sinçi*⁷⁴ lives among Uyghurs.

Another word *arbaqçi* fits the shaman features properly. It means “one who uses such [spoken] charms [for curing snake bites, or procuring fine weather]”. Sevortyan clearly shows that *arba-* is a metathesis of *abra-* or *apra-*.⁷⁵ The word’s root is Mongolian *ab*⁷⁶ “witchcraft, sorcery, charms; temptation, allurements, enticement”. We can analyze the word as below:

⁶⁹ M. Räsänen, *op. cit.*, p. 447a. Also, in Altai there is the word *şinji* (~ *şinjü*) with the meaning “control, inspection”. Its cognates are *şinjüçi* “researcher, explorer”; *şinjüle-* ~ *şinjüle-* “to test, to experiment, to inspect”; *şinje-* “to look over, to oversee; to follow; to hurry”; *şindeş* “looking out for”. For these Altai words see Emine Gürsoy-Naskali - Muvaffak Duranlı, *Altayca-Türkçe Sözlük*, Türk Dil Kurumu, Ankara, 1999, p. 163a.

⁷⁰ Nezir Temur, *Kırgız Türklerinde Sinçilik Geleneği ve Kırgız Sinçileri*, Türk Dil Kurumu, Ankara, 2014, p. 44.

⁷¹ N. Temur, *ibid.*, p. 45.

⁷² N. Temur, *ibid.*, p. 35.

⁷³ R. B. Shaw, (1880), *op. cit.*, p. 123; R. B. Shaw, (2014), *op. cit.*, p. 231a.

⁷⁴ *Uygur Tilinin İzahlık Lugiti*, III, 1992, p. 718b., entry *sinçi* (I).

⁷⁵ Edvard Vladimiroviç Sevortyan, *Etimologičeskiy slovar’ tyurkskih yazıkov, (Obşçetyurkskiye i mejtyurkskiye osnovi na glasniye)*, Akademiya Nauk SSSR, Institut Yazıkoznaniya, Nauka, Moskva, 1974, p. 168-170.

⁷⁶ F. D. Lessing, *op. cit.*, p. 1b., entry *ab* (2).

arbakçi < *ab* + *ra* - *k* + *çi*

In Old Uyghur, there are the words *arviş*⁷⁷ and *arvişçi*⁷⁸ which correspond to the words *arbak* and *arbakçi*.

Although we do not find *arbakçi* and its cognates in *Uyğur Tiliniñ İzahlıq Luğiti*, in Jarring's *An Eastern Turki-English Dialect Dictionary*, we encounter with the words *arba-* ~ *arva-* ~ *awa-* "to say charms, to procure" and *arbag* ~ *arbag* "charm, magic formula".⁷⁹

The last word related to soothsaying or magician is *közlük*. It means "far-sighted, long-sighted; also, gifted with the evil eye [supposed to be a great advantage as the possessor can compel the sale to him of any horse, &c., that he takes a fancy to, under penalty of causing it to die if it be refused to him]."

Actually, the word *közlük* (< *köz* "eye" + *luk*) is different from other words up to now we looked at. The other words refer to the people with extraordinary hidden powers who help to solve the problems of others, by curing snake bites, by procuring fine weather or by telling one's fortune. However, *közlük* uses his spiritual powers for gaining advantage in his daily life.

Today, in Uyghur there is a word *közlük*⁸⁰ with a different meaning from *közlük* which Shaw mentioned in his dictionary. It means "having eye, setting with an eye [a ring etc.]". Uyghurs, today, use *közi yaman*⁸¹ to indicate people who have evil eyes.

Lastly, I want to mention a word which has an interesting relationship between the word's basic meaning and the activity it indicates. The word *karalıq* [قارالیق *qara-liq*] shows how the religions and the cultures integrate into each other.

Shaw gives the meaning of the word *karalıq* as "in mourning (which in Yarkand consists in not shaving, putting on white and not-coloured clothes, &c.)". The word's basic meaning is "in black, having black".

⁷⁷ Klaus Röhrborn, *Uigurisches Wörterbuch, Sprachmaterial der vorislamischen türkischen Texte aus Zentralasien*, III (anta-asanke), Franz Steiner Verlag GmbH, Wiesbaden, 1981, p. 217a.

⁷⁸ K. Röhrborn, *ibid.*, p. 218a.

⁷⁹ See Gunnar Jarring, *An Eastern Turki-English Dialect Dictionary*, CWK Gleerup, Lund, 1964, p. 26.

⁸⁰ *Uyğur Tiliniñ İzahlıq Luğiti*, IV, 1994, p. 656b.

⁸¹ *ibid.*, IV, 1994, p. 654a.

ƙara “black” in Turkic culture is used in a very wide range, like indicating direction, namely north or indicating bigness. In Chaghatay culture, *kara erik* means great, moving army.⁸² *ƙara* mostly reflects grief, mourning, evil spirits and it symbolizes death.⁸³

The word *ƙaralık* in Shaw’s dictionary also indicates mourning. However, we learn that people in mourning, were not wearing black clothes. Instead of black clothes, they were wearing white clothes, which is the tradition of Buddhist or Chinese culture.⁸⁴

According to oruhlu, wearing white clothes as a sign of mourning springs from Manichaeism. And, he establishes a relationship between Manichaeism and Old Uyghurs. oruhlu thinks that it would not be wrong if we try to find the root of mourning color, white, in Uyghur period. In Manichaeism, white represents the light (goodness), and this color appears as the color of monks’ clothes.⁸⁵

One may expect the term for indicating this mourning activity as *aklık* namely, in its basic meaning “in white or having white”. It is clear that using the word *ƙaralık* shows Old Turkic belief system and tradition while the activity it reflects indicates the subsequent cultural area’s features, namely Buddhist and Manichaeist cultural characteristics.

Today, this word and this tradition live among Uyghurs. To Rahman, Uyghur men wear white belts and Uyghur women wear white head scarves

⁸² Cevad Hey’et, “Türklerin Tarihinde Renklerin Yeri”, *Nevruz ve Renkler*, Türk Dünyasında Nevruz İkinci Bilgi Şöleni Bildirileri, (Ankara, 19-21 Mart, 1996), Sadık Tural - Elmas Kılıç (eds), Atatürk Kültür, Dil ve Tarih Yüksek Kurumu, Ankara, 1996, p. 57.

⁸³ Toker gives detailed information on the function of *kara* “black” in Turkic culture through comparing *ak* “white”. By the way, Toker shows that among Turks the “greatness” -in terms of age or an army’s bigness- was symbolized by the white color, *ak*. For details see İhsan Toker, “Renk Simgeçiliği ve Din: Türk Kültür Yapısı İçinde Ak-Kara Renk Karşıtlığı ve Bu Karşıtlığın Modern Türk Söylemindeki Tezahürleri Üzerine”, *Ankara Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi*, 50:2, 2009, p. 93-112.

⁸⁴ Watson identifies nine main features of funeral ritual in late imperial China. To his list the second action is “donning of white clothing, shoes and hoods (made of sackcloth or hemp) by mourners”. See James L. Watson, “The Structure of Chinese Funerary Rites: Elementary Forms, Ritual Sequence, and the Primacy of Performance”, *Death Ritual in Late Imperial and Modern China*, James L. Watson and Evelyn S. Rawski (eds), University of California Press, Berkeley, Los Angeles, London, 1988, p. 12. Also, wearing white clothes in mourning is seen in contemporary Sri Lankan burial practice. See Rita Langer, *Buddhist Rituals of Death and Rebirth: Contemporary Sri Lankan practice and its origins*, Routledge, London, New York, 2007, p. 62.

⁸⁵ Y. oruhlu, *op. cit.*, p. 196.

when their relative dies. They take off their white clothes after seventh day of their relative's death.⁸⁶

To sum up, in Shaw's dictionary among six words related to the general names of soothsayers, magicians or, in some aspects shamans we see that *rambal*, *kuşnaç*, and *yağrünçi* directly bear the meaning "soothsayer". Although the word *sinçi* with its English definition does not seem to carry the features of soothsayer or magician when we look at this word's root, it can be seen that *sinçi* is actually a kind of soothsayer. And, together with the word *arbaqçi* it shows shaman attributes. The word *közlük* is separated from other five words in our word group related to soothsayers or magicians in terms of the aim of using his spiritual powers. *közlük* gets benefits for just himself by using his mystical powers. Apart from this word group through the word *karalık* it can be seen that Uyghur mourning customs show cultural complexity.

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⁸⁶ Abdülkerim Rahman, *Uygur Folkloru*, T.C. Kültür Bakanlığı Yayınları, Ankara, 1996, p. 115. In Yüan dynasty the Mongolian court declares a writ about mourning regulations of Uyghurs living in North China. It consists of 5 items and Cleaves gives the second item as "let the daughters and daughters-in-law wear white mourning and let [their] hair down. Among [them], if there are male relatives who are monks and who should wear mourning, let them wear white bands on their shoulders. Let [those of them who are] laymen let their hair down". See Francis Woodman Cleaves, "Uighuric Mourning Regulations", *Journal of Turkish Studies / Türklük Bilgisi Araştırmaları*, Volume 1, Edited by Fahir İz - Şinasi Tekin, Cambridge, 1977, p. 69. In the fifth item and subsequent passage Uyghurs had been proscribed not to adopt Chinese mourning practices. And it emphasizes that Uyghurs had their own regulations handed down from the past and they should have adhered to their own practices. In fact, the order in the item 3 shows that Buddhism seems to be the principal religion for burial ceremony: "... provide vegetarian meals for the monks who recite *ching* 經 ["sūtra"]..." See F. W. Cleaves, *ibid.*, p. 70. Also, for the translation of item 5 and subsequent passage in the text see Ch'ên Yüan, *Western and Central Asians in China Under the Mongols: Their transformation into Chinese*, Translated and annotated by Ch'ien Hsing-hai and L. Carrington Goodrich, Monumenta Serica Monograph XV, Published by Monumenta Serica at the University of California, Los Angeles, 1966, p. 249-250.

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